

Smith, Jeanne Shaheen, Richard J. Durbin, Richard Blumenthal, Robert P. Casey, Jr.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Catherine Elizabeth Lhamon, of California, to be Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Department of Education, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 50, nays 50, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 418 Ex.]

YEAS—50

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cardin	Leahy	Sinema
Carper	Lujan	Smith
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Merkley	Warner
Durbin	Murphy	Warnock
Feinstein	Murray	Warren
Gillibrand	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Hassan	Padilla	Wyden
Heinrich	Peters	

NAYS—50

Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hagerty	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeben	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tillis
Crapo	Marshall	Toomey
Cruz	McConnell	Tuberville
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	

(Mr. KELLY assumed the Chair.)

The VICE PRESIDENT. On this vote, the yeas are 50, the nays are 50.

The Senate being evenly divided, the Vice President votes in the affirmative.

The motion is agreed to.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Thank you, Madam President. It is good to see you here today.

The VICE PRESIDENT. Good to see you.

NOMINATION OF CATHERINE ELIZABETH LHAMON

Mrs. MURRAY. I come to the floor today to support strongly the confirmation of Catherine Lhamon to serve as Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the Department of Education.

She is extremely qualified for this role. In fact, she has served in it before. In 2013, Ms. Lhamon was confirmed to the same role by voice vote. During her past tenure, she demonstrated her commitment to students across the country as she worked to combat sexual assault on college campuses, protect

transgender students, reduce the use of seclusion and restraint, reduce disparities in school discipline based on a student's race or disability, and enforce civil rights laws to protect students.

Unfortunately, the previous administration took major steps backwards when it came to supporting and protecting students—for example, by significantly reducing efforts to enforce civil rights protections and rescinding important policies to address campus sexual assault.

Now, as we know, the pandemic has also done serious damage and worsened deep-seated inequities for students whose families earn low incomes, students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities.

We have a lot of work ahead to fix this and help our schools rebuild stronger and fairer, which is why I am especially glad to see Secretary Cardona and President Biden working so hard to right the wrongs of the last administration and support our schools through this pandemic.

I know Ms. Lhamon will be a critical, capable partner in those efforts because not only did she tackle many of these challenges in her past service as Assistant Secretary, but even after her service in the Obama administration, Ms. Lhamon continued fighting for civil rights through her time as the Chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, her work litigating civil rights cases with the National Center for Youth Law, and as legal affairs secretary to the Governor of California.

She currently serves the Biden administration as Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director to the Domestic Policy Council for Racial Justice and Equity.

Ms. Lhamon is a highly qualified nominee. She has a long track record that proves she is a champion for students through and through, and that is exactly what our students need. I am thrilled to have her returning to the Education Department's Office of Civil Rights. I urge all of our colleagues to join me in voting for her confirmation.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. KELLY). The Senator from Kansas.

FIFA WORLD CUP

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I am joined on the floor today by my colleague from Missouri, Senator BLUNT, and we rise today to welcome the FIFA World Cup selection committee to Kansas City and to express our strong support for Kansas City's bid to serve as the 2026 World Cup host city.

I express my gratitude to the leadership of Mayor Quinton Lucas and to the leadership of Kathy Nelson from the Kansas City sporting authority, the president and CEO.

Our community, our joint community—Kansas City, people may know, is on two sides of the State line—the Missouri side of the State line and the Kansas side of the State line. Sometimes we are rivals, but in many in-

stances, we are allies and friends, and that is the circumstance we are here today.

Kansas City boasts a rich history of both professional and amateur sports. Kansas City is the home of the National Collegiate Basketball Hall of Fame; the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum; as well as the 2020 Super Bowl champions, the Kansas City Chiefs; the 2015 World Series champions, the Kansas City Royals; and the two-time Major League Soccer Cup champions, Sporting KC. It is also the hometown of our world-renowned football coach, Ted Lasso.

Sporting KC has energized the region's diverse and passionate soccer fan base—a fan base that I am confident is ready to pack up their bags and head to Arrowhead Stadium, the loudest stadium in the world, to cheer on the U.S. men's national team and other nations that compete there.

Soccer has become an even larger part of the culture of Kansas City after U.S. Soccer's National Development Center officially opened in Kansas City, KS, in May of 2018. The NDC is the perfect location—the perfect location—for any team to recover, practice, and prepare for their upcoming matches.

Spanning more than 50 acres, this 81,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art practice, education, and medical facility includes three natural grass fields and two artificial turf fields, with a two-story coaching pavilion, and houses the Children's Mercy Sports Medicine Center.

Kansas City has been host to other major sporting events. The city regularly welcomes thousands and thousands of fans for events such as the Big 12 men's NCAA basketball championship and the NCAA March Madness and will be the location for the 2023 National Football League—the NFL—Draft.

Due to major investment in Kansas City's transportation and infrastructure—something that both Senator BLUNT and I and our colleagues, Senator HAWLEY and Senator MARSHALL, have worked on—Kansas City is well equipped to support soccer fans from around the globe. They will be welcomed at a brandnew Kansas City International Airport, which is currently undergoing a \$1.5 billion renovation restart for a state-of-the-art terminal that is scheduled to be completed in 2023.

In 2020, Kansas City also became the first major metropolitan area to offer bus transportation free of charge. Additionally, the Kansas City Streetcar offers free fares with stops just a short walk from many magnificent dining and dynamic entertaining experiences in Kansas City.

Early in my postcollege career, I had an office in downtown Kansas City. The circumstances of Kansas City today and that long time ago when I was a worker in downtown Kansas City are significantly different. The entertainment opportunities are immense—the

arrival of a major, magnificent Sprint Center; hotels, new, large, elegant—all have arrived in Kansas City in just the last few years.

I am confident the entire Kansas City region is ready to make the 2026 FIFA World Cup a resounding success and is excited to add this prestigious tournament to its sporting history.

Again, we welcome the World Cup selection committee to Kansas City today and to the State of Kansas and to the State of Missouri. We welcome them. They are being welcomed to a world-class city known for its heartland hospitality.

I yield to the Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to thank my good friend Senator MORAN for actually all he has done to try to make it possible to see the FIFA World Cup games come to Kansas City.

This is the biggest sporting event in the world. Frankly, soccer has become a bigger part of the entire American society. Kids are playing soccer out there before they can really focus on which way the soccer ball is supposed to go. There is maybe nothing more fun than watching the 3- and 4-year-old soccer match just to see what happens in that match. But around the world, it is important. It is important where Jerry and I live. Giant banners with the phrase “We Want the Cup” are proudly displayed on buildings. They are on the streetcar. They are everywhere you want to look. The Kansas City Chiefs’ quarterback, Patrick Mahomes, and the Royals’ catcher, Salvador Perez, are leading the charge to bring the World Cup to Kansas City.

There is no question that sports are a major part of where we live, professional and nonprofessional. The Women’s World Cup in 2019 was celebrated by fans watching games in the Power & Light District. They were broadcast on TV all over the world. Watching Kansas City fans watch the World Cup, we saw hundreds of thousands of fans flood the streets to join the Kansas City Royals in celebrating their World Series title in 2015. We saw an incredible crowd when the Kansas City Chiefs brought home the Lombardi Trophy in 2019. In 2023, Kansas City will host the NFL Draft.

So if our friends from the World Cup selection team are watching, there are others things that have happened to give evidence to the great sports heartbeat of Kansas City. There is plenty to look at and plenty to see. We have the infrastructure we think we need to meet that world sporting event.

Arrowhead Stadium, as Senator MORAN mentioned, is top notch. It is a great place for fans. It is a great place to feel the sense of the game and what can happen there. Local leaders have done everything they could, I think, to secure the right kind of practice fields, the right kind of facilities. Children’s Mercy Park would be one of those. In 2021, the Concacaf Gold Cup was hosted there.

Mayor Quinton Lucas is here today. In fact, he is here watching us today

from the Gallery. He is here advocating for all things Kansas City but is a particular advocate for seeing this world-class event come to Kansas City.

Location is another advantage we have. We are right in the middle of the country. We are close to the host cities in Canada and in Mexico that would be part of this event. I think we are better positioned than the other 16 cities to really move forward on this bid.

The new airport, as Senator MORAN mentioned, will be welcoming to whoever comes to this event if they come to Kansas City. They are going to be pleased with that facility.

There are lots of opportunities in Kansas City to spend your free time and enjoy what we get to enjoy all the time: the famous barbecue, the world-class museums, the Negro Leagues Museum in Kansas City, the Nelson-Atkins art gallery. There is really a vibrant nightlife and music scene in Kansas City today.

Nearby States have agreed that Kansas City is the right choice. It has become the Midwest choice for this event. In May, associations that represent 310,000 youth soccer players, coaches, and referees from the Midwest came together to endorse the Kansas City bid.

The financial benefits are obviously benefits that we would be excited about if we get a chance to host this. According to the Kansas City Sports Commission CEO and president, Kathy Nelson, the economic impact on the region could be up to \$1 billion.

With a rich sports culture, endless entertainment options, strong infrastructure, and an easily accessible central location in our country, Kansas City is the right choice for the 2026 FIFA World Cup host city, and Senator MORAN and I and our colleagues from Kansas and Missouri endorse this effort and are glad that the selection team is looking today at what they are going to get if they decide to come to Kansas City.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

ISSUES FACING AMERICA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, right now, the end of the pandemic may be—I underline “may be”—within our reach. The Delta surge is finally waning. Over the past month, coronavirus case numbers have fallen by more than 40 percent, thank goodness. The average number of daily vaccinations has increased by more than 25 percent—not an unrelated statistic—and COVID death rates are finally starting to decline. These are all promising developments, and they demonstrate that President Biden’s response to the coronavirus is working.

But as winter approaches, we need to ask ourselves a serious question: Will we continue to take the steps that are necessary to save lives and beat this virus once and for all? Or will we do nothing, as some of our Republican colleagues seem to urge, and allow the

pandemic to come roaring back for another deadly wave?

Millions of American families have already suffered the consequences of denial, deception, and inaction. A report released earlier this month found that since June—just since June—nearly 100,000 American lives could have been saved if there were more vaccinations. But we can save the next 100,000 lives in America if we rally behind the President’s call for his vaccination policy. The American people are already with him. The majority of people support mandating COVID-19 vaccinations for students 12 and up.

Business owners across the country have followed President Biden’s lead by instituting their own vaccine mandates. They have helped increase vaccination rates by more than 20 percent. In Texas, where the Governor is seeking to outlaw vaccine mandates, one hospital CEO said that requiring his workers to be vaccinated is “unequivocally . . . the best decision we ever made” and that 98 percent of his staff has now been vaccinated.

President Biden’s vaccine policy is supported by parents and business owners alike because they recognize a very simple truth: The only way to keep our kids in school, keep our economy on the road to recovery, and stop the spread of this deadly virus is vaccination. A do-nothing strategy is deadly and disastrous for our economy. Yet that is exactly what many of our Republican colleagues continue to propose that we do: nothing. It is the same response they had earlier this month when it came to raising the debt limit.

Let me reflect for a moment on the effort that is underway by State attorneys general. The Republican attorneys general across the United States represent 24 different States. They have threatened to file lawsuits to try to stop vaccine mandates and mask requirements.

I think it is fair to take a look at the period of June 15, 2021, to September 15, 2021, and ask how the States are doing represented by these attorneys general who are fighting President Biden’s coronavirus policy. Well, we took a look at the average of the 24 States that are threatening these lawsuits. Their infection rate is more than twice than all the other States’. So the people in their States where they are supposedly fighting for their well-being are losing when it comes to the infections of coronavirus.

How about the death rates? Of the 24 States in this period of time threatening lawsuits, we have a death rate almost three times the death rate in the other 26 States. The vaccination rate is lower in the 24 States represented by these Republican attorneys general.

So what are they winning? Some political war? What the heck difference does it make who wins a political war when we are talking about a life-and-death issue? And that is frankly what we are faced with.

When it comes to the debt limit, we see the same negative default approach